1:Marshall E-5 (1952-1953) 1959 FX10 Bushmen FX10
Kung

588 One of the most rigid social rules the /Kung have, besides the incest taboo within the nuclear family and its extension, is the giving of bride-service. We heard of no [591] deviation from it. A boy or man of any age, a headman or headman's son, an important medicine man, all go to live with their brides' parents or other relatives in first marriages and subsequent marriages, whatever the age of the bride.

The duration of bride-service is indefinite. Informants told us a man must stay with his wife's people until three children have been born. If he goes when the girl is eight or nine, she may not have her first child for possibly seven or eight or more years. It is safe to say that ten years of bride-service are not unusual. It is long enough for the boy's youth to have turned to manhood and for him to be looked upon as an [591] able, responsible head of his family. After his bride-service is fulfilled a man may remain with his wife's band or may return with his wife and children to his own.

The Wedding of !Nai and /Gunda

159 /Nai was a pretty little girl, we think about eight years old, or so, with a quick [582] responsive smile, when she was married on 22 May 1953, at Gautscha. The bridegroom, /Gunda, was about sixteen, we judged, and the people said he was the best young hunter among the boys of the territory.

/Nai belonged to Band 1, /Gunda to Band 2. Both of these bands belong to the [621] water-hole at Gautscha and were encamped there at the time, about 100 feet apart. We lived with Band 1.

/Nai's mother, Di/ai, had divorced her former husband, Gumtsa, the father of /Nai, and was now the second wife of the medicine man, Gao, in Band 1. /Gunda's mother, Khuan//a, had divorced /Gunda's father, Bo. Khuan//a was now the second wife of Gau in Band 2. Both Gumtsa and Bo were living far from Gautscha.

159 The two mothers had betrothed their children some time previously. We heard 584 that Di/ai had had her eye on the strong young /Gunda, saying, 'We must get this [581] boy for /Nai so he will take care of her and we can get enough to eat, also karosses', and had gone to Khuan//a to propose the betrothal. Khuan//a had said, 'Yes, this is very good.' The mothers exchanged gifts. Khuan//a gave to Di/ai a necklace of five strings of ostrich egg shell beads which reached to the umbilicus (shorter strings would have been inappropriate) and Di/ai gave other beads and copper wire ornaments to Khuan//a.

Gumtsa, /Nai's father, heard about the betrothal. He had hoped to arrange a marriage between /Nai and someone of his choice at Kubi where he lived. One day in November 1952 he came to Gautscha to complain, he said, that he had not been [578] consulted and to protest against the betrothal and take /Nai to Kubi with him. Tension rose. /Nai cried and looked very frightened. The members of both Bands 1 and 2, [628] though they had no theoretical authority in the matter, all expressed themselves and poured torrents of talk over the affair, mostly supporting Di/ai in her steadfast refusal to yield /Nai, saying that Gumtsa had not fed /Nai, had not so much as sent her a gift, and should not now come and interfere in her betrothal. After four days of this Gumtsa gave up and went home.

159 Meanwhile the affair, like a spoon stirring in a pot, brought to light another ten- 584 sion. Some of /Nai's relatives began to express disapproval of her betrothal, not 578 because they wanted her to go with the father but because they were angry with

/147 cont./

222 Rosinkis of the Boers
So-called "wild cucumbers"
Mushrooms which grow on termite hills

251 The veld crop that has been gathered is kept in the huts in
[415] little sacks made of duiker or ibex leather.

/148/ The Auin also stores small caches of provisions by burying sacks of veld crops; he likewise buries tschamma or ostrich egg shells filled with water. In the tops of large trees one often finds, aside from animal hides, provisions of veld crops which are kept there. [Fig. 9 appears here.]

423 Land is held in common, that is, it is the common property of a horde consisting of several families. The game in this territory, as well as the wood and the veld crops, is exclusively for the use of the members of the community that holds the land. The watering places that are to be found there are available for general use, but only if water is abundant. If water is scarce, the local group that holds the land has exclusive right to it.

361 The local groups sometimes live at considerable distances
423 from one another so that the same land is used by several settle-
621 ments. The settlements, after all, do not consist of a fixed number of families, but rather of those who are gathered together in fortuitous groupings as the occasion arises. Whatever the accidental composition of the settlements may be, their members always move within a definite area, and it is always the members of the same larger horde who form the settlements.

423 Friendly hordes permit tracking, that is, game that has been
619 wounded on the land of one horde may be pursued on the territory of a friendly horde. A part of the booty is allotted to the "land-
[685] owner" within whose territory the game is killed. A definite agreement is required in each case since the Bushman attacks on sight any strange Bushman on his family's terrain.

628 Blood vengeance is not sought for a violation of territory if the local groups are especially friendly. The offender is driven off and, in addition, just as in Prussia, his "firearms" and booty are confiscated. The policing of the terrain is done by each Bushman on his communal land.

[721] If women are caught trespassing, they are taken prisoner and led to the settlement of the owners of the terrain. This frequently leads to war if the women are harmed sexually during their captivity.

[Text continues on page 32]

/148 cont./
628 captivity. Blood vengeance is exacted by the Bushmen for
684 adultery under all circumstances.

J. Luxuries

276 Tobacco, which is exclusively an imported product, is
[439] greatly coveted. A pipe of tobacco is the Auin's greatest pleasure. [Fig. 10 appears here.]

Taking snuff is unknown.

Everybody smokes, including little children.

The Auin manufacture a tobacco pipe (see Fig. 10) from a
324 soft red stone (serpentine) which supposedly is found only at the watering place Korikas. Indeed, immediately above the source, one does find a kind of modest quarry there.

/149/ A fragment of this stone is conically hollowed out with a lance point or an iron knife and then shaved down on the outside toward the hollow until the wall is about two to four millimeters thick. This pipe resembles an ordinary conical cigar
276 tip. A wadding made from the nest of the weaver bird (?) prevents the tobacco from falling out.

Occasionally one will also see a pipe plug or cleaner which usually is made of rosinkis wood without the bark and is attrac-
[531] tively decorated with a kind of pyrography. The decoration consists of lines and dots scratched in with a red-hot needle. The hairline precision of the lines is particularly striking.

The pipe plug (see Fig. 11) is worn around the neck on a chain of glass beads or on a leather belt (see also Photo. 1, the second man from the right).

The Auin only occasionally receives tobacco, either from
[439] the Whites when he performs services for them as a messenger,
[648] guide, and the like, or from Kaffirs employed by Whites, who exchange it for veld food.

Hemp or dacha of the Kaffirs (haium of the Auin).

Hemp is smoked in the ordinary tobacco pipes with equal passion by men and women.

I did not see anyone who had become ill from smoking hemp. The Auin themselves were only aware that its enjoyment sometimes produces nausea.

/154 cont./

622 Every Auin adult can really do as he likes on the condition that he does not offend against "good Bushman custom." On the other hand, he recognizes a chief, who, however, has as good as no authority at all. If, however, the chief has a rifle, for example, or if he is a very strong man, he has correspondingly greater influence. I have the impression that the chief acts more as a representative, a position which is of most importance in dealings with the Whites.

The chief has actual sovereign rights, like every other Bushman, only over his wives and children, and over the latter only while they are small.

No tribute or service is rendered, just as there are no external insignia of the chief's office.

The chief's office is hereditary in the male descent group. The office is not inherited until the candidate belongs among the men, that is, after schooling (see below) and after the killing of the first piece of big game. There is no proxy during the minority of the candidate. It works, even so!

619 /155/ The settlements unite and separate again depending on the circumstances.

631 The chief of a horde, which is not always united in one village, is called aichabn.

At a gathering of about 1,000 Auin, several chiefs were present. A common supreme chief was lacking.

Evidently it is old families of chiefs that possess these traces of authority. They constitute no special caste and do not belong to a foreign race.

Q. Administration of Justice and Social Conditions

428 The oldest son is the heir of the insignificant legacy, which primarily consists of a few utilitarian objects and hides.

The widow inherits nothing, but she keeps the property she already owns. Younger sons and daughters inherit nothing.

628 Blood vengeance is the basic concept that gives the legal notions their distinctive character. The son is obligated to avenge his slain father; the brother avenges his brother. I was

/155 cont./

628 unable to learn whether these obligations also extend to more distant degrees of kinship.

If the murderer himself has died or cannot be reached, blood vengeance extends to his nearest male relatives.

The sons of a murdered man are obligated to take blood revenge as soon as they are grown.

The mother of the future avenger inculcates this duty in her [867] son as she rears him. As soon as the young man has killed the [884] first piece of game, his obligation goes into effect. He turns [602] to his kinsmen for help, which is immediately granted him. Similarly, the one who has reason to fear blood vengeance finds armed support among his relatives and fellow villagers. One can imagine what a maze of obligations for blood vengeance can arise from this situation.

619 It can happen that two settlements are "saddled" with so
628 many obligations for vengeance that an encounter between members of these settlements immediately leads to bloodshed. Perhaps this also helps to explain the fact that some villages within the Auin region have for many years been so hostile to one another that a boundary violation is punished by death on the spot.

Example: Auin from Rietfontein and Gam. It goes without saying that a mortal enmity more often exists between Bushmen of different languages, for instance, between Auin and Naroon, or Auin and Genkuin [Ginkwe]. An enmity of this kind evidently does not extend to the group as a whole; instead, it is doubtless always confined to a certain number of families and settlements.

The basis for the administration of justice is extensive and
628 energetic self-help. Any injustice inflicted is avenged by the injured party or his kinsmen with a beating or murder.

As an example of the kind of self-help and the complications resulting from it, I shall cite the following authenticated case. An old Auin from Olifantskluft was visiting his brother-in-law in Sidonitzaub. The host set a snare and caught a giant bustard which the guest found, took out of the snare, and began to consume. His host arrived on the scene and stabbed his brother-in-law in the stomach with his throwing spear. The murderer fled, but he was apprehended and shot by relatives of

/155 cont./

628 the slain man. Now, naturally, a blood feud exists between the settlements, which, incidentally, are related to each other directly and by marriage.

648 Furthermore, it is interesting that the Auin from
[123] Sidonitzaub sent a messenger to me in Rietfontein, where I was station commander, and had him inquire whether I had any objection to their making "orlog" [Tr., probably from the Dutch word oorlog, "war"]. I conveyed to them that the affair was none of my business since the war would take place in British territory. Unfortunately I was transferred from Rietfontein shortly afterward and was therefore unable to witness the campaign as a "military correspondent." According to reliable reports, the war has been settled and three men were killed.

This inquiry addressed to me makes it clear that under the pressure of present conditions the "unfortunate child of the moment" does not always surrender immediately to the impulses of the moment.

674 It is scarcely possible to give even a rough picture of the legal notions of the Auin.

There is no doubt that the Bushman possesses a very definite sense of justice, but I do not feel capable of comparing it intelligibly to our own conceptions of justice.

It is a little easier to indicate what the Bushman (Auin) regards as absolute injustice, such as murder, theft, adultery, violation of the family territory, and stealing water (the latter only if little water is available). At any rate, with extended investigation, the catalogue could be considerably enlarged.

422 Personal property includes the hut (though this is not an object of value), weapons, clothing, utilitarian objects, hides, and ornaments.

It is true that the gathered veld crop, game that has been killed, and water that has been collected are also personal /156/ property, but these are subject to extensive communal use which becomes more limited only in case of famine or a water shortage.

423 The land of the horde is communal property, as are the game, veld crop, wood, and water on the land, the latter with limitations.

When a Bushman has burned off a piece of land in order to

≠Auin
Naron
Nogau

[72 cont.]

169 children, who are always approximately two or three years apart.

Among the Naron the bride is formally abducted; the word
585 for "to marry" is the same as "to catch." Actually, however,
[583] negotiations precede this abduction. Among the Naron exogamy
582 now applies only to actual siblings. After the wedding the young
591 couple moves to the village of the bride's parents and sometimes stays there for years. There is also infanticide among the Naron.
847 Otherwise, however, the Bushmen are greatly attached to their
855 children.

5. State and Law

Among the ≠Auin, the chief's position is hereditary in the
622 man's tribe. The same is true among the Nogau. Among the
[178] Naron there are no actual chiefs any more. The last one lost his authority by staying on the farms most of the time as a worker. Bleek believes that formerly such a chief ruled 30 to 50 families.
[701] In most recent times all these tribes had a war chief, at least nominally.

422 Among all three tribes the conception of private ownership
685 of utilitarian objects is very strongly developed, and theft is punishable by death. Every kin group has a certain territorial district. The boundary markers are not clearly defined everywhere
423 in this flat terrain, so that crossing them does not have the same serious consequences as it does in the north. On the other hand, a person who finds game that was killed by arrow poison but not shot by him, may not take any of it. The gathering of veldkost is permitted everywhere. A person who finds a stock of honey, on the other hand, makes a sign there, and it is henceforth his private
[222] property. Among the ≠Auin individual Bushmen burn parts of the
[425] veld, and all the veldkost that grows there is regarded as the individual's private property.

The feuds between individual kin groups are designated as
● 628 wars, but since legal revenge is practiced almost exclusively
721 against members of other hordes, every [73] enforcement of the law at the same time means war. Among the Nogau, war is ceremoniously announced by messengers.

organisation among them. The various so-called tribes bear distinctive names, mostly of Bushmen or Hottentot origin, the significance of which is in most instances no longer known. Judging by the practice which still exists among the Bushmen they are in all probability descriptive either of the territory occupied by certain groups or of some physical or other characteristic of such territory or groups. Each tribe is composed of a number of family groups all of whom claim relationship to each other through a common tribal ancestor. Thus, for example, according to the traditions of the ǂ*Ao-//ēin* all the groups constituting that tribe are descended from a " first big ǂ*Ao-//ēin* Bushman." A similar belief likewise exists among other tribes. Nothing in the nature of a central authority whose decisions are binding on all members of the tribe is met with among them, nor is collective action taken in the interests of the tribe as a whole. Each family group forms an independent unit by itself, possessing its own group area and authority over and specific rights within such area only. In relation to other groups it is collectively responsible for the actions of each of its members. When differences arise they are confined to the groups concerned and not participated in by the rest of the tribe. On occasion, however, a weak group will seek and sometimes obtain assistance from a stronger one, but such alliances are never of a binding or permanent nature. The most common causes of inter-group quarrels are trespass, theft and adultery. The ensuing conflicts generally assume the form of a blood feud which is continued until a more or less equal toll of life has been taken by both sides. Women are never killed intentionally during the course of these feuds but it not infrequently happens that when one group overwhelms another the women are made captive and taken in marriage. Further as far as can be ascertained under no circumstances will the victors deprive the vanquished of their territory or occupy such territory lest harm or disaster should overtake them. The more widely separated groups of the tribe have no personal knowledge of or direct personal contact with each other and generally live in such superstitious fear and dread of each other that the members of one will not undertake journeys into the territory of another, even when accompanied by Europeans. The group areas are separated from each other by neutral zones into which nobody will venture except during the course of visits. These zones are usually formed by belts of trees, open flats, water courses, etc. Territorial boundaries are observed in a most scrupulous manner even by closely related groups who are living on the most friendly terms with each other. Each family is inseparably united to its habitat and has a superstitious dread of any locality but its own. The result is that even the members of completely disorganised groups are loth to seek employment outside the boundaries of their ancestral territory.

15: Marshall E-5 (1951-1961) 1965
FX10 Bushmen FX10
!Kung

square miles, centered approximately at Gautscha (about 19°48'30" S, 20°34'36" E). The region lies for the most part in South West Africa, but extends into the Bechuanaland Protectorate to a number of Tswana and Herero settlements along the border. We arbitrarily call this particular stretch of country a region because it is a region in the minds of the Bushmen. In it are some 27 bands living independently in their own traditional way and 9 groups employed by the Tswana and Herero—a !Kung population of about 1000. These !Kung intermarry. They have not formally structured the region as an endogamous unit, but they remain within it by custom and preference. They know there are other !Kung-speakers living to the north and northwest of them, but consider them strangers, as they do the Auen-speaking and Naron-speaking Bushmen to the south.

ECONOMY

It is vividly apparent that among the !Kung Bushmen, ethos, or "the spirit which actuates manners and customs," is survival. Their time and energies are almost wholly given to this task, for life in their environment requires that they spend their days mainly in procuring food. The band organization is important to their survival, and, to secure the mutual support and companionship that it affords, they seek to regulate their social actions to reduce tension and potential hostility among the individuals within the band. They also strive to avoid the possibility of conflict between bands. Similarly, in their religious concepts and practices, the emphasis is on survival in this life on earth, not a looking forward to the eternal life in the sky after death.

WILD PLANT FOODS (*veldkos*) • The !Kung of the Nyae Nyae region have no agriculture. They subsist mainly on wild plant foods, which we refer to by the convenient Afrikaans word *veldkos*. The game the hunters of a band manage to kill is an important part of their diet and much desired, but it is by no means the daily sustenance. In this region the !Kung know more than a hundred different kinds of veldkos (cf. Story 1958). Several species of berries exist, dry and hard for the most part. A few fruits ripen suddenly in a short season. Leaves, resembling spinach, make a spring salad for a short time. Morsels of gums from certain trees are cherished like sweets. Tsama melons and wild cucumbers grow here but do not abound in this region as they do in some other parts of the Kalahari where some Bushman groups can live on them for certain seasons without having access to any water. Most important to the daily sustenance of the Nyae Nyae !Kung are the edible underground roots, tubers, and storage organs of certain drought-resistant plants. We observed the gathering of 23 different kinds of these; doubtless there are more. In addition to the roots and tubers, there are sev-

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Gathering Mangetti Nuts

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eral large groves of mangetti trees (*Ricinodendron rautanenii* Schinz) in the region, all on great waterless white sand dunes, and one extensive area in which *tsī* grows. *Tsī* (*Bauhinia esculenta* Burch) is the seed of the vine that runs along on the surface of the ground. Both mangetti nuts and *tsī* are excellent foods, rich in oils and proteins, and so important to the !Kung that they organize their lives to a considerable extent around them.

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Each band, according to !Kung social structure, owns and lives within what we call a territory. The band, through its headman (in a way to be explained later), owns the veldkos and water resources within its territory. The territories are varied in size and shape and sometimes consist of portions that are not even contiguous. The boundaries are vague, for the need to draw fine boundary lines is not great. In the interior of the region, where water is so scant, in roughly 8000 square miles live only 17 bands, comprising 447 persons. The other bands and employed groups live on what we call the periphery of the region. The !Kung say that one cannot eat the ground itself so it does not matter to whom it belongs. It is the patches of veldkos that are clearly and jealously owned, and the territories are shaped in a general way around these patches. The !Kung of the interior have settled themselves in such a way that every band has access to areas of edible roots and to either a mangetti grove or a *tsī* patch. A few bands have both.

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The strong concepts of ownership of veldkos by the band operate almost like a taboo. No external force is established to prevent one band from encroaching on another's veldkos or to prevent individuals from raiding veldkos patches to which they have no right. This is just not done. Fear of fighting is one of the deterrents. The poisoned arrows of the Bushmen are as deadly

[p. 248]

The poisoned arrows of the Bushmen are as deadly to man as to game and they are always at hand. A mere nick and a speck of poison in the bloodstream can be fatal. There are no known antidotes.

As skilled trackers of game, Bushmen develop their powers of visual observation and train their visual memories to such a high degree that they know everyone's footprint as well as his face. This is another deterrent, for no one could steal veldkos without leaving his marks and having his identity detected. Theoretically, in !Kung society the thief may rightfully be killed by the person or the band from whom he has stolen, but he may fight back, and relatives could also become involved and the fighting would spread. In the opinion of the !Kung, situations likely to engender hostility are assiduously to be avoided, to say nothing of actual fighting. Breaches of this intention are very rare.

Life throughout the seasons is planned around the veldkos gathering. The people know at what seasons the various veldkos will ripen and about how much each patch will yield if the rains have been good or if they have been poor. The !Kung are not, according to our way of thinking, exactly conservation-minded, but they do plan to consume their veldkos in advantageous order. They eat the perishable short-seasoned leaves and the few fruits as soon as they ripen. They leave until the dry season is advanced certain beds of roots and tubers that are edible the year around if they remain in the ground.

The headman of the band has the authority and the duty, according to !Kung social regulations, to plan the band's movements, to say to which veldkos area they will go and when, and, if the band separates temporarily into segments, to know where each segment is going and, in general, what veldkos it will consume. It is a matter of life and death to plan and control as best they can and not to travel for days, counting on food and finding that one segment of the band has eaten it all, unbeknown to the others.

Each type of veldkos and each area presents its problems of logistics, water being the determining factor in the plans, for usually water and veldkos are not in the same place. During the big rains and for several weeks after, the pans and vleys become shallow ponds and small, temporary water holes are filled. It is the time of relative plenty. The people find sufficient water to enable them to move about with comparative freedom in their country, wherever there is something to gather. When the dry season sets in, the problem is to carry enough water from the water hole to the veldkos area in ostrich egg shell containers and to carry enough veldkos back to the water hole. It is a ceaseless labor.

The distances the !Kung travel between water and fertile areas in these gathering trips vary from a few miles to twenty or thirty. The people do not manage greater distances except in the rainy season, when they go as far as seventy-five miles to a mangetti forest.

When the people go to gather mangettis or tsi, the men always ac-

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On the Move A Bushman hangs his possessions on a carrying stick and thrusts his assegai under the stick in back to distribute the weight onto both shoulders.

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462 When the people go to gather mangettis or tsī the men always accompany the women and help to gather and to carry the heavy loads—as much as they possibly can—back to the water hole.

Though the men help, especially with *tsī* and mangettis, gathering and digging are the work of women and the work that takes up the greater portion of their energy and time throughout their lives. Their digging implement is a sharpened, unweighted stick about three feet long. When we were living with the Gautscha bands at the Gautscha water hole in the dry season, the women went to gather every day or every second or third day, depending on the distance and on how much food they could carry back. They would plan which patch or fertile area to go to and start out in small groups, some to one place, some to another. They would walk five or ten or fifteen miles to their destination and then pick berries or dig roots, which may lie two feet or more under the ground, until the mid-afternoon, and then start back to the werf (campsite) at the water hole. They carry their infants tied to them, small children on their shoulders, and the loads of veldkos in the bulges of their karosses (skin capes). When they near the werf, they pick up two or three logs for the night fires.

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The veldkos that each woman gathers belongs to her and with it she feeds her own family, sharing with whatever relative or friend she wishes. Custom does not require her to share it in a systematic way with others as meat must be shared. She cooks her veldkos in the coals and hot ashes, pounds fibrous roots and hard berries in her mortar, and serves the food to her family as a family meal, usually in the evening. During the day, however, people may cook and eat little snacks at odd times.

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731 Although there are numerous kinds of veldkos, we must not give the impression that there is a great abundance. In fact, the opposite is true. Food is scarce all over the arid Kalahari, where drought is the scourge on all—the cattle raisers, the dry farmers, and the gatherers of the wild foods.

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[582] There has been much intermarriage in the Nyae Nyae region. Families therefore may have close relatives—with whom they have the right to live—

15: Marshall E-5 (1951-1961) 1965
FX10 Bushmen FX10
!Kung

in several different bands, and they may choose among them. A band that owned comparatively good resources would tend to attract more members than a band with scant veldkos. This flexibility of residence pattern is one of the reasons that one finds the bands of the interior of the Nyae Nyae region relatively in balance with their resources, and varying in size.

WATER • Two or more bands may share the ownership of a water hole. Water holes keep their own rough population balance because, if water is very scarce, people will go to live elsewhere when they have the possibility of doing so.

In the interior of this region, in roughly 8000 square miles, there are three water holes that can be called really permanent. In the driest years these do not fail. Four others dry up only in years of severe drought. Six more are semipermanent: in a very good year they may yield a little water right through, but in a dry year they are sure to dry up. When the semipermanent water holes go dry, the bands who own them may break up temporarily and the families may go to live with relatives who are at permanent water holes, or they may go as whole bands to another water hole where they have relatives.

Water is not owned as exclusively or as jealously as veldkos. Water seems to belong more to mankind, as the animals do, and the ownership of water holes emphasizes more the managing than the withholding of the water. The headman controls the water. His permission should be asked by travelers or visitors before taking water, "because he knows what he has and what can be done," we were told. We saw small temporary water holes marked with bundles of grass thrust into forked sticks. This was to tell visitors or travelers that the owners of the water hole were in residence, as it were, and were counting on the water. We believe that in these circumstances water would not be taken without permission. Occasions are not likely to arise where permission need be refused. The !Kung know where the others are, or are likely to be, at a given time and know how much water is available. They plan better than to get themselves into desperate situations.

One source of water appears to be owned by individuals. It is the rainwater that collects in hollow mangetti trees. The water in trees is not stolen by others who go to gather in the same mangetti forest. Water, incidentally, is the only beverage of the !Kung in the interior of the region. They have no alcoholic drinks and use no infusions of herbs.

HUNTING AND MEAT SHARING • !Kung hunting regulations do not confine the hunters to territories. The game animals belong to no one until they are shot, and the hunters may follow them anywhere the spoor leads and may cross the territorial boundaries of any band. If hunters have made a kill in the territory of a neighboring band, they would not fail to give a present of

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224 By killing one male kudu (600 lbs.) with a weight 24 times greater than that of a steenbok (25 lbs.) a hunter would provide his camp with a quantity of meat roughly equivalent to that provided by 20 steenbok (assuming that the kudu has a somewhat lower ratio of edible to inedible parts than does a steenbok).

[628] On the face of it, hunting large antelope would appear to have overwhelming advantages in terms of meat. However, when news of such a kill reaches neighboring camps, dozens of friends and relatives descend upon the killer's camp to assist him in disposing of the meat. Thus at the end of several jovial days the superabundance of meat disappears and the fortunate hunter is out looking for meat again. The killing of a large antelope therefore has more prestige value than nutritional value to the family of the man who killed it.

This pattern of sharing large kills beyond the boundaries of a camp is ecologically adaptive because meat spoils quickly, especially during the rainy season and it is often necessary to eat meat that is in danger of becoming rotten.

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251 The Bushmen know how to make biltong (dried strips of meat) but rarely do this. This infrequency of making biltong is probably both a cause and an effect of sharing meat widely. The only part of a large antelope kill that is consistently set aside for future consumption is the hide. This part of

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[251] the animal evidently has much better storage properties than the flesh.

In general, the larger the animal killed, the more widely its meat is shared. The meat of springhare, hare, steenbok, and duiker is usually consumed by the hunter's immediate family. The meat of wart hog, antbear and porcupine is [628] shared out among the members of a hunter's camp. The meat of kudu, wildebeeste and gemsbok is shared out among the hunter's camp and among members of neighboring camps.

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223 Birds - The eating of birds again illustrates the selective food tastes of the Bushmen. Of the 75 species of birds recorded only eight species were said to be eaten and of these only four species were observed to be systematically hunted. The four important game birds were:

crowned guinea fowl	red-billed francolin
Swainson's francolin	red-crested korhaan

The other birds eaten were:

Kori bustard	double-banded sandgrouse
Cape turtledove	red-billed teal

Snares were regularly set in order to capture guinea fowl, francolin and korhaan. Occasionally other birds triggered the snares. Usually these other species were fed to the dogs. Occasionally they were simply discarded.

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825 Only the eggs of the above eight species appeared to be

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[628]

hills hold standing water only during the summer months. During this season, the members of two /ai/ai camps, the !ubi camp, and the Bate camp mingle freely at its water sources. This mingling of groups also occurs at some of the large summer pans such as !gauŝa and čharačharaha where members of different winter groups come together for weeks or even months.

The foregoing discussion has highlighted the flexible nature of !Kung Bushmen territoriality. This flexibility is manifested in the frequency of visiting between waterholes, the vagueness of territorial boundaries and the existence of food areas that are said to belong to nobody.

TABLE 7

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The kills made by the hunters of the Dobe camp during a 28-day period (6 July to 2 August 1964).

Date	Hunter	Species	Technique	estimated weight of meat
July				
7.	ǂoma	wart hog	with dogs	80 lbs.
7.	ǂoma//gwe	steenbok	snare	12
9.	/ase	steenbok	snare	12
17.	ǂoma	wart hog	with dogs	80
20.	ǂoma	wart hog	with dogs	80
20.	ǂoma//gwe	honey badger	snare	10
20.	ǂoma//gwe	python	collected	20
21.	/ase	steenbok	snare	12
23.	nǂeysin!a	steenbok	snare	12
23.	ǂoma//gwe	hare	snare	3
24.	ǂoma	bat-eared fox	with dogs	4
27.	/ase	hare	snare	3
27.	ǂgau	korhaan	snare	2
27.	nǂeysin!a	korhaan	snare	2
28.	ǂoma	wart hog	with dogs	80
29.	ǂoma//gwe	kori bustard	snare	10
30.	nǂeysin!a	steenbok	snare	12
31.	/ase	porcupine	cornered in burrow	20
				454 lbs.[1]

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[1] In addition to the meat from these 18 kills, the Dobe Bushmen received gifts of meat from other camps. The weight of meat from these outside sources is estimated at 36 lbs. Therefore, the total meat eaten at Dobe was around 490 lbs.

132 highs in the 90's. The warmer weather heralds the onset of
312 spring which is the most difficult season of the year. Most
137 of the waterholes have no mongongo nuts within a ten mile
222 radius. The alternative foods, roots and bulbs, are being collected daily by some of the people, while others are making the long overnight journeys to the nut forests.

221 Since territories vary in the abundance of early spring
574 foods there was a noticeable tendency for families to visit
628 other camps. For instance in September, Bate still had a good supply of Sclerocarya caffra, nuts; and several families from Dobe, Mahopa, and !angwa converged upon Bate to eat these nuts. Similarly !ubi had a supply of Baobab fruits (Adansonia digititata) and other families made extended visits to relatives there. The maintenance of close ties between camps made possible a more equitable distribution of foodstuffs, so that, if there was scarcity at one camp, and food at another, the members of the first camp would not go hungry. This is one of the highly adaptive features of the fluidity of !Kung group structure.

[563] Some families fall back on the Herero villages at this
[431] time of year to beg for milk. This occurs especially among those people who have a sister or cousin married to a Bantu man. Both the Bushman and Herero codes of good manners demand that visiting in-laws be fed (L. Marshall 1961).

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221 this account of the seasonal round has come full circle to the starting point.

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433 In summary, there are, in effect, only three basic sets of subsistence conditions for the Bushmen:

1. Water everywhere - Food everywhere
2. Water limited - Food abundant
3. Water limited - Food scarce.

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433 When the first set of conditions prevail during the rains of November through March, Bushman life is sweet. The camps
[628] can live near the most concentrated food sources within their
[574] territory, or share in the food supply of neighboring camps,
[602] or easily undertake the long trips to visit relatives at distant waterholes.

When the second set of conditions prevail, from April through July, freedom of movement is more restricted but food is still abundant enough to make life comfortable.

When the third set of conditions prevail, from August through October, the Bushmen must resort to increasingly arduous tactics in order to maintain a good diet, or, alternatively they must content themselves with foods of less desirability in terms of abundance, ease of collecting and nutritive value.

It is during the three lean months of the year that the Bushmen life approaches the precarious conditions that have

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361 transhumant annual round, in which they alternate between their rainy season range and their dry season range.

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628 The Dobe area !Kung do not undertake long marches of 30-70 miles for the purpose of getting food. This task can be readily fulfilled within a day's walk of their territorial water sources. When such long marches occur, they are invariably for the purposes of visiting, trading, and marital exchanges with relatives at distant camps. As such, these trips should not be confused with the normal routines of subsistence.

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162 Range Size and Population Density -- By plotting the movements of the various camps in their annual subsistence cycle, the observer can derive a rough estimate of the total land area that is required to support the population of 430 Bushmen. It would be much more difficult to estimate the area necessary to support a single camp, because of the considerable overlap of territories and the frequent visiting between camps. It will be more useful to treat the entire population as a unit. It is estimated that the 800 square miles that lie within a six-mile radius of major water sources are sufficient to support the population for most of the year. Beyond this radius lies a hinterland which is rarely penetrated; perhaps a further 200 square miles of this hinterland is utilized in the course of a single year. Thus the total annual range of the Dobe area Bushmen may be estimated at 1,000 square miles. This calculation sets the effective population

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Chapter IV

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

Tribe and Hunting Band

All the Bushmen in their native condition lead a nomadic hunting and collecting life, roaming about in search of the game and wild vegetable foods upon which they depend for their existence. The conditions of their subsistence necessarily prevent them from banding together permanently in any considerable numbers. Wherever they still retain to any marked degree their original mode of life and organization they are found scattered over the land in small separate communities.[1] Each such community will be spoken of here as a hunting band. The members of a band share a common life, they see one another constantly, they co-operate in many ways, and they are all as a rule friendly and on fairly intimate terms. Each band also has occasional relations with other neighbouring bands, through intermarriage and trade, and visitors may pass from one to another. On the other hand, there are often quarrels between neighbouring bands, which may result in a prolonged state of feud and even lead directly to warfare.

The various bands among the Heikum are generally referred to among each other by a name which indicates either the locality in which they live, or describes some physical or other characteristic of the band itself or of its locality. The *se-khoin*, for example, are the people of the *seb* or plain; the */gom-khoin* the people who eat the

[1] The social organization of the Bushmen is one of the least-known aspects of their culture, and sadly needs careful and detailed investigation. The most reliable sources of information refer almost exclusively to the North-Western tribes: Passarge, *Die Buschmänner der Kalahari*, 1907; Kaufmann, "Die Auin," *Mitt. deuts. Schutzgeb.*, xxiii (1910); (Miss) D. F. Bleek, "Buschmänner von Angola," *Archiv Anthrop., N.F.* 21 (1927); *idem*, *The Naron*, 1928; *idem*, "Bushmen of Central Angola," *Bantu Studies*, iii (1928); L. Fourie, "Customs of the Hei-//om Bushmen," *J. SW. Afr. Sci. Soc.*, I (1925–6); *idem*, "The Bushmen of South-West Africa," in *The Native Tribes of South-West Africa*, 1928. The relevant literature on the other tribes is for the most part fragmentary, although some valuable data on the Namib Bushmen are given by Seydel, "Aus der Namib," *D. KolBl.*, xxxi (1910), and by Trenk, "Die Buschleute der Namib," *Mitt. deuts. Schutzgeb.*, xxiii (1910). Where no special reference is made to any particular tribe the analysis given above must therefore be regarded as applying especially to the North-Western tribes, who are also the only Bushmen still leading a fairly independent life.

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office is hereditary. His authority is very slight, and apparently exercised mainly in regulating the movements of the people from place to place, and in leading in war.

Each band also acts as a unit in its relations with other bands of the same or of neighbouring tribes, and in such relations it is collectively responsible for the actions of any of its members. When differences arise they are confined to the bands concerned, and not participated in by the rest of the tribe. Occasionally, it is true, a weak band may seek and obtain assistance from a stronger neighbour, but such alliances are never of a binding or permanent nature.[1]

The band is also the land-owning group. Each band possesses its own hunting territory, to which it is restricted, and exercises authority over and specific rights within this territory only.[2] The members of the band roam about freely all over their own land, but do not trespass on their neighbours' territory, although single persons and small parties may occasionally pay short visits across the border, mostly for trading purposes. As a result of this territorial segregation it may often happen that the more widely separated bands of a tribe have no personal knowledge of or direct contact with each other.

There are no special boundary marks between the areas occupied by different hunting bands. The limits of each area are as a rule defined by various natural landmarks, such as sand dunes, koppies, river-beds, vleis, springs, or even trees. These are well known to the people themselves and carefully observed. In some cases the areas of different bands are separated by neutral zones, formed by belts of trees, open flats, watercourses, etc. Nobody will venture into these except during the course of a visit. In particular, however, each hunting territory is defined by the waterholes in it. These constitute the real property of the band. The encampments are always erected near them, all the game on the land around them or drinking at the water may be hunted only by members of the band, and similarly only they may gather "veldkos" (wild vegetable foods) in the vicinity. The infringement of territorial rights in this respect is one of the main causes of dispute between neighbouring bands, and almost invariably leads to bloodshed.

[1] The relations between different bands are discussed more fully below in Chapter VI, s.v. "Relations with Other Bands"; vide p. 155

[2] Trenk, op. cit., 168; Kaufmann, op. cit., 148, 156; Passarge, op. cit., 31–2; Seiner, "Bereisung der Omaheke," 303; D. F. Bleek, *Naron*, 4; Fourie, "The Bushmen," 85; Lebzelter "Bei den ǂKun-Buschleuten," *Mitt. anthrop. Ges. Wien*, lix (1928–9), SitzBer. (12).

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among the Namib Bushmen the victim may take back not only the stolen property, but also all the thief's possessions. That blood vengeance is actually exercised in case of theft appears from the following incident recorded by Miss Bleek. An Auen man had a good deal of tobacco, most of which he hid in a tree. Returning later he found the tobacco gone, and human footprints round the tree. He followed the spoor to one of a cluster of huts, where he saw a Bushman sitting at the fire cutting the stolen tobacco. Although he had only a spear with him, he darted up and stabbed the thief to death. The man's wife, intervening, was also stabbed. Then the assailant tried to escape, but was shot in the side by a poisoned arrow from the group round the next fire. He succeeded in reaching his home, but died of the poison a few days later. Similarly, in the waterless regions of the Namib Desert, men on the hunt often store up supplies of water in ostrich egg-shells and also of meat. Another person coming upon this supply may take from it, but must follow the spoor of the owner, tell him about it, and recompense him. If this is not done the owner, when he discovers the loss, will follow the spoor of the thief until he finds him and will then kill him if he can.

Here, according to Trenk, homicide in case of theft and adultery is apparently not regarded as murder, but as punishment, and the relatives of the deceased may not take blood vengeance. But, as shown in the instance quoted from Miss Bleek, among other Bushmen homicide, whether deliberate or accidental, leads inevitably to blood vengeance, the relatives of the dead man combining to kill the murderer. This appears also from another instance recorded by Knudsen.[1] A Bushman, not far from Bethanie in South-West Africa, shot another in the leg with an arrow during a honey beer drinking-bout. The wounded man revenged himself on the spot by shooting his assailant in the heart and killing him. The dead man's brother pursued the killer, who fled, but could not overtake him, and so returned to the camp, where he met the man's wife carrying a child. He tore it from her, threw it up in the air and caught it on the point of his spear. The mother saved herself by fleeing, but two other women

still living, she may be handed over to them and they all have to leave the camp. Should the father be dead and the mother alive, the thief is still taken and given back to the latter, after the stolen property has been recovered. But, if she is an old offender, the mother is said to give her, through a son, to another person, to be burned to death. These facts, obtained from a single young informant, need, however, to be confirmed. The deliberate burning to death of people, for whatever reason, is not reported of any of the other Bushmen.

[1] Quoted in Moritz, "Die älteren Reiseberichte über Deutsch-Südwestafrika," *Mitt. deutz. Schutzgeb.*, xxix (1916), 154.

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627 related to the homicide were killed by the brother. What happened
682 afterwards we are not told, but judging from what is known of blood revenge among the Bushmen it is hardly likely that the matter was allowed to rest there.

Among the Auen, for example, a son is obliged to exact blood
628 vengeance on the slayer of his father, a brother for his brother. If
682 the slayer himself is dead or out of reach, the feud extends to his nearest male relative. A son whose father has been killed is obliged to undertake vengeance as soon as he is grown up. His mother impresses this obligation upon him during his childhood, and as soon as he has caught his first head of big game the obligation must be carried out. He applies to his nearest relatives for help, which is given without question. In the same way whoever has to fear blood vengeance is supported by his relatives and the members of his band. Not only
[562] men but women also may become the objects of the blood feud, although as a rule the latter are taken and held as wives by their captors. So, too, among the Namib Bushmen the slayer is killed by the relatives of the dead man. All the male members of the latter's family combine to revenge his death; an arrow is shot at the slayer, and if this does not immediately kill him he is beaten to death with the kirri. Murderesses are also killed in this manner; but otherwise
[562] women, even for such serious offences as theft and adultery, are only punished by thrashing, although this may sometimes be very severely administered.

We are not told whether the killing of the slayer or his substitute leads to the cessation of the feud, but from an instance quoted by Kaufmann it apparently does not. An old Auen man from Olifantskloof was visiting a brother-in-law at Sidonitsaub. The host put out a snare, in which he caught a giant bustard. This was found by the guest, who took it out of the snare and began to consume it. While he was doing so, the host came up and observing the theft pierced him through the body with a spear. The slayer then fled, but was pursued by the relatives of the dead man and killed. Since then a blood feud has existed between these two bands, connected though they were by marriage.

The only exception to this general rule of self-help is recorded by
[184] Seydel of the Namib Bushmen.[1] He states, it is true, that in case of
622 minor offences self-help is frequently resorted to, but adds that all
692 serious offences are formally adjudicated. The court consists of one

[1] Seydel, op. cit., 305–6.

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619 621 [221] [423] Bushmen from all parts of the Ghansiveld, even from different tribes, owing to the abundance of animal food thus provided. And again Passarge states that in the Central Kalahari there are also common hunting grounds in which during the rainy season members not only of different bands but also of several different tribes may be found hunting together peacefully, although at other times of the year each band carefully avoids going beyond its own area.

114 619 621 All this suggests that there must be some sort of machinery, however imperfect or ill-organized, to regulate social contacts between different bands. Unfortunately the information bearing upon this most important point is so inadequate that it is extremely difficult to determine to what extent the bands are socially interrelated. There are indeed one or two hints of common meetings at special times for ceremonial purposes. Thus Kaufmann, in describing the boys' [881] puberty ceremonies among the Auen, states that the initiates are drawn together from several neighbouring villages,[1] while Lebzelter, in his preliminary account of the Kung, makes the tantalizingly brief statement [574] that in the months of March and April different bands come together for great feasts.[2] Occasionally, again, a weaker band may seek and 726 obtain assistance from a stronger neighbour. Thus the men of several 619 Auen bands united with some Naron to attack another Auen band, 621 although once the fight was over the alliance was dissolved.[3] Such alliances are never of a binding or permanent nature, nor does it appear that the different bands of the same tribe are commonly organized together for political purposes. But the occurrence of such interrelations as have just been noted definitely indicates that there must be some form of regulated intercourse between neighbouring bands. Without further research in the field, however, no additional light can be thrown upon the nature and mechanisms of this intercourse.

578 619 621 628 [685] 648 685 On the other hand, the relations between neighbouring bands are not always friendly. Homicide, trespass, theft, adultery and wife-stealing give rise to quarrels and conflicts which generally assume the form of a blood feud and may even lead to war.[4] Trespass especially is a frequent cause of dispute, as all the Bushmen readily attack those who encroach on their land. This applies not only to other Bushmen,

[1] Kaufmann, "Die Auin," 157.
[2] Lebzelter, "Bei den 'Kun-Buschleuten," 13.
[3] Kaufmann, op. cit., 154.
[4] Kaufmann, op. cit., 148, 154; Trenk, "Buschleute der Namib," 169, 170; Zastrow, "Ueber die Buschleute," 13; Seiner, "Bereisung der Omaheke," 303; D. F. Bleek, *Naron*, 40; Fourie, "Bushmen of S.W.A.," 85.

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but formerly even to Europeans. In the Cape, for example, "If the white man were a passing hunter and friendly, if he shared his bag with the Bushmen, he was welcomed and could travel through the territory in peace; but when the settlers came in, permanently occupying the land at the springs, and doing great execution among the game, then the Bushmen retaliated by shooting the intruders or killing their stock. Whereupon the white man, unaware of any unfriendly behaviour on his part, dubbed the Bushman an untamable savage and a thief, and did his best to imprison or shoot him. Hence the war of extermination, which has reduced the race of Colonial Bushmen to its present vanishing figure."[1]

Among the Auen, when neighbouring bands are on friendly terms, wounded game may be followed by the members of the one on to the territory of the other. A portion of the game must, however, be given to the owners of the land. Refusal to do so is always dangerous. Where the bands are very friendly it does not necessarily lead to bloodshed; the trespasser is merely driven away, and his weapons and game confiscated. Otherwise, however, he is killed. Women caught trespassing are seized and taken to the camp of their captors; this often leads to war, when they are violated. And again the killing of a man by the members of another band always results in a state of feud.

It may happen that between two bands there is so strong a feud of this nature that a meeting between their members invariably leads to bloodshed. It is probably due to this, says Kaufmann, that among the Auen many bands are so antagonistic that violation of the territorial bounds leads to immediate punishment by death; and he cites the bands at Gam and Rietfontein, between whom there was a long-standing enmity. Among the Kung there is also much hostility between neighbouring bands, especially when, as occasionally happens, an attempt is made by one band to take from another the land it occupies, if this is very rich in veldkos. The oppressed band, if the weaker, must move, but the fights are conducted with great bitterness, and the deep enmity aroused extends over generations. A similar condition of feud is reported to have existed between several bands of the Namib Bushmen, where, for example, in 1907 the people of Buntveldschuhhorn, in consequence of such a state of hostility, led an attack on those living at Aurus. Feud is also common between bands belonging to tribes of different speech, e.g. the Auen and the

[1] D. F. Bleek, *The Mantis*, p. viii.

2: Schapera E-4, 5 (no date)1930
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628 Naron, or the Auen and the !Ginkwe. This does not extend to the whole tribe, but only to the bands concerned. The Naron at Sandfontein, in the same way, were also hostile to the /nu//en in the south as well as to the Auen in the north; trespass and wife-stealing led to many fights between them.

628 726 701 [622] [887] [411] Fights between opposing bands are therefore by no means unusual, but the extent of each campaign is small.[1] The chiefs have general command in war, but their authority is scarcely greater than in peace, where, as we have seen, it is but slight. The older men with experience naturally have an influence corresponding to their knowledge and ability. Every man and youth takes part in a campaign, the weapons used being the ordinary hunting bow and arrow as well as the spear. The magician also fights, but without any special authority or functions. We have no eyewitness account of any such campaigns, but Kaufmann gives a description, obtained from a "trustworthy Kafir informant", which may serve to convey some idea of their nature. Among the Auen there is no formal declaration of war, but when a man wears a cap of aardwolf (*Proteles cristatus*) skin, then he is on the warpath. Several friendly villages came together and decided to attack another village. The war caps were put on, and after sunset the men marched in the direction of the enemy village. In the neighbourhood of the latter a halt was made and without lighting a fire, although it was the cold time of the year, they waited until the morning. After sunrise, when it was somewhat warmer, the village was surrounded and attacked from all sides, the spear being chiefly used. There was loud shouting and calling, but no special war cry; and in general everybody fought as he pleased.

628 721 628 726 628 727 [184] [721] If possible, all men are killed, and also boys, for fear of the blood feud. Women are never killed intentionally, but it not infrequently happens that when one group overwhelms another the women and girls are made captive and taken in marriage. All objects that can be used are also taken away, but the huts are not regarded as worth the burning. Among the Heikum, according to Fourie, the victors will under no circumstances deprive the vanquished of their territory or even occupy it, lest harm and disaster overtake them; on the other hand among the Kung, as already mentioned, disputes over the possession of land are among the prime causes of war. What happens to the land of the defeated group in other tribes is not stated. The

[1] Kaufmann, op. cit., 154; Fourie, op. cit., 85.

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campaign is brought to an end among the Auen by agreement, The 628
unarmed negotiators passing freely between the two groups, and an 727
indemnity is paid to the victors in the form of women, material 728
objects, and food. There is no information relating to peace-making
in other tribes, and even Kaufmann's statement about the Auen lacks [114]
corroboration.